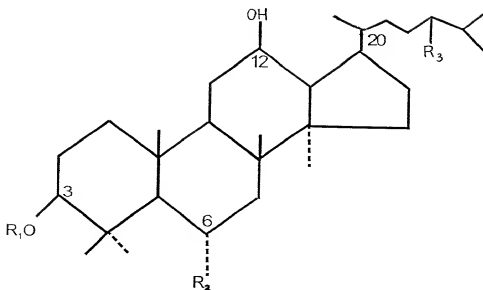


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A sapogenin according to the formula:



wherein R<sub>1</sub> is H, glc or glc<sup>1-2</sup> glc, R<sub>2</sub> is H or OH, R<sub>3</sub> is H or OH; and when R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are H, there are double bonds at positions 20(21) and 24(25); and when R<sub>1</sub> is H, R<sub>2</sub> is OH and R<sub>3</sub> is OH, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 25(26); and when R<sub>1</sub> is H, R<sub>2</sub> is OH and R<sub>3</sub> is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 24(25); and when R<sub>1</sub> is glc, R<sub>2</sub> is H and R<sub>3</sub> is H, there are double bonds at positions 20(22) and 24(25); and pharmaceutically acceptable compositions incorporating said sapogenins.

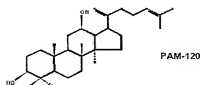
2. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are H, and there are double bonds at 20(21) and 24(25).
3. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R<sub>1</sub> is H, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are OH, and there are double bonds at 20(22) and 25(26).
4. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R<sub>1</sub> is H, R<sub>2</sub> is OH and R<sub>3</sub> is H, and there are double bonds at 20(22) and 24(25).
5. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R<sub>1</sub> is glc, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are H, and there are double bonds at 20(21) and 24(25).

6. A sapogenin as claimed in claim 1 wherein R1 is  $\text{glc}^{1-2}\text{glc}$ , R2 and R3 are H, and there are double bonds at 20(22) and 24(25).

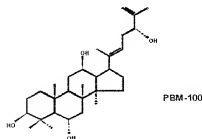
7. The use of a sapogenin according to the formula recited in claim 1 in  
5 treating cancer cells in a human being suffering from cancer, comprising killing cancer cells, inducing apoptosis in cancer cells, or inhibiting multiplication of cancer cells, or any combination thereof.

8. The use of a sapogenin according to the formula recited in claim 1 in  
10 treating multi-drug resistant cancer cells (MDR) in a human being suffering from cancer, comprising using the sapogenins either singly, or in combination with one another, or in combination with other chemotherapy agents.

9. A sapogenin according to the formula:  
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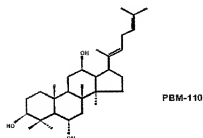


10. A sapogenin according to the formula:

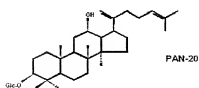


11. A sapogenin according to the formula:

5



12. A sapogenin according to the formula:



- 10 13. A sapogenin according to the formula:

